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MICHIGAN CORRECTIONS OFFICER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS SELECTED

The Michigan Corrections Officer of the Year Committee selected five finalists for the 2012 Michigan Corrections Officer of the Year. The five finalists were selected from 34 officers who were nominated to serve as the Officer of the Year from their facility or work site. The 2012 Officer of the Year will be recognized at the Officer of the Year Banquet on May 9, 2012 at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing, MI.

The five finalists in alphabetical order are:

Officer James Ball - Oaks Correctional Facility

Officer Ball is a 12-year veteran of the Michigan Department of Corrections and has served at Pugsley and Oaks correctional facilities. He has been a resident unit officer at Oaks Correctional Facility (ECF) since 2003. Ball is a dedicated and highly motivated officer. He is described as level-headed, fair and respectful. He is a certified trainer in several departmental programs and is a valued member of the facility's emergency response team (ERT).

In September 2011, Officer Ball and the ECF ERT assisted the Mason County Sheriff's Department in search of a 4-month-old infant that was alleged to have been abandoned somewhere in Mason county. He has been a volunteer firefighter for 13 years, volunteers for the annual "Shop with a Cop" holiday gift program and coaches youth sports.

Officer James Kotowicz - Ionia Correctional Facility

Officer Kotowicz has been with the Department since 2000, serving at Ionia Correctional Facility (ICF). He promoted to resident unit officer in June 2002, and is actively involved in the Secure Status Outpatient Treatment Program since its introduction at ICF. He has been instrumental in the general population reintegration effort at the facility as well. Officer Kotowicz is dependable and consistent, and who values evidence-based programming that positively influences offender behavior. He exhibits infectious enthusiasm and a 'can do' attitude, helping encourage other staff to participate in facility activities.

Kotowicz has been involved in many critical incidents involving prisoner misconduct or misbehavior including two incidents of attempted suicide and four incidents of self-injurious behavior. Kotowicz was first on the scene at these incidents and his quick actions averted more serious outcomes. Officer Kotowicz helped deliver a restraint-use class for new officers not accustomed to using restraints as frequently as they are used at ICF. Away from work, Officer Kotowicz helps with

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church fund-raisers and is active in the Knights of Columbus. He is a member of the ICF "Rock Runners," a group that runs several 5K benefit races each year.

Officer Robert McGaffigan - Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility

Officer McGaffigan started his career at the Huron Valley Men's Facility in November 1995, and transferred to Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility (LRF) in October 2004. He is knowledgeable, is professional and embodies the integrity and leadership skills necessary for the job. He serves as a role model for others and communicates well with prisoners, staff and the public. Officer McGaffigan was a driving force in implementing new segregation checklists and inventory forms that facilitate the more efficient operation of the unit. When a prison in the complex closed, McGaffigan stepped up to assist new officers in learning their new assignments and making them feel welcome. His positive attitude and assistance bolstered their morale, making the transition easier.

Personally, Officer McGaffigan is involved in Special Olympics Michigan, coaching athletes in basketball and poly-hockey. He has also "adopted" disadvantaged youth during the holidays, ensuring they have clothing, coats, and gifts to open.

Officer Dana Richards - Pugsley Correctional Facility

Officer Dana Richards started with the Department in 1997 at the State Prison of Southern Michigan in Jackson. She worked at Camp Branch until it closed in 2009, transferring to Pugsley Correctional Facility (MPF) where she now works. She has enhanced her experience in a variety of areas including as a grievance coordinator, Diversity Committee member, Chief Steward, and program contributor. Officer Richards is professional and outgoing. She demonstrates a very business-like approach to her duties and is honest in her dealings with prisoners and staff. While working at Camp Branch, Officer Richards saved the life of a prisoner who was choking. She is a member of the MPF Employee Club and has been instrumental in many projects at the facility including implementation of the prisoner ID scanner for food service.

Outside the MDOC, Officer Richards worked for 12 years with the Family Independence Agency in Coldwater as a home care provider, assisting elderly and disabled citizens with daily activities. She also assisted with her son's Little League baseball program.

Investigator David Sharp - Absconder Recovery Unit

Investigator David Sharp of the Department's Absconder Recovery Unit (ARU) has worked for the Department since 1997, starting as an officer in Jackson's Central Complex. He has also held positions of sergeant and corrections transportation officer during his career. In March 2011, Investigator Sharp was the first ARU member to join the United State Marshals Service (USMS) Task Force for Michigan's Western District. The task force focuses on fugitive recovery. Because of his familiarity with Michigan prisons, Sharp has become an asset for the USMS Task Force. In turn, the USMS is able to expedite requests to pick up Michigan's most wanted absconders throughout the United States without delay. The collaborative effort enhances the efficiency of both agencies. Investigator Sharp's skills impressed the USMS, who approached the Department about adding ARU members to fugitive recovery teams in Detroit and Flint. Through 2011, Investigator Sharp had over 170 absconder arrests. This total does not include arrests of fugitives wanted by the task force who are not absconders. In November 2011, Investigator Sharp was injured while apprehending a parole absconder. Instead of taking the next several months off to recuperate, Sharp continued to administratively work his caseload, completing background investigations and telephone interviews, then providing tips to the task force who affected the arrests on his behalf. He takes great pride in doing his job, and no injury that limited his mobility was going to limit his ability to do his job.

FINALISTS (Continued on page 3)



FINALISTS (Continued from page 2)

Investigator Sharp has also enhanced the ARU in other ways. He is working to deliver a SWAT-style first aid class to ARU members throughout the state and with Vehicle and Travel Services to have emergency lights installed on ARU vehicles to promote safety.

Investigator Sharp has been an active member in his community since high school. He spent 18 years as a volunteer firefighter, serving on three fire departments during that time. When he wasn't fighting fires, he was coaching youth football. He has coached on several different levels, from 4th and 5th grade up through high school. He currently referees football games as an MHSAA football referee.

Each of the remaining facility Officers of the Year deserve recognition as well. Please congratulate them on their accomplishment:

Officer Chad Argensinger.....	St. Louis Correctional Facility
Officer William Barnes III	Corrections Transportation - CFA
Officer Michael Bauers.....	Chippewa Correctional Facility
Officer Mark Bradshaw.....	Charles E. Egeler Reception and Guidance Center
Officer Shannon Brown.....	Central Michigan Correctional Facility
Corporal Elvira Chapman	Special Alternative Incarceration
Officer Jeffrey Cromell	Alger Correctional Facility
Officer Virgena Hayes	West Shoreline Correctional Facility
Officer David Kalnins.....	Carson City Correctional Facility
Officer Trent King.....	Lakeland Correctional Facility
Officer David Kytola.....	Ojibway Correctional Facility
Officer Paul Lamse	Richard A. Handlon Correctional Facility
Officer Patrick McGough.....	Thumb Correctional Facility
Officer Daniel Miilu.....	Michigan Reformatory
Officer Trent Myles	Woodland Center Correctional Facility
Officer Timothy Morey	G. Robert Cotton Correctional Facility
Officer Wayne Oien	Baraga Correctional Facility
Officer Daniel Pelkola.....	Marquette Branch Prison
Officer Andy Petersen	Bellamy Creek Correctional Facility
Officer Kevin Pickard.....	Cooper Street Correctional Facility
Officer William Putnam.....	Field Operations Administration
Officer Jason Quainton	Parnall Correctional Facility
Officer Gwendolyn Reynolds.....	Women's Huron Valley Correctional Facility
Officer Emily Robinson	Macomb Correctional Facility
Officer Anthony Salter	Newberry Correctional Facility
Officer Janice Schmidt	Kinross Correctional Facility
Officer George Stennis.....	Ryan Correctional Facility
Officer Phillip Thomas	Gus Harrison Correctional Facility
Officer Chad Williston.....	Saginaw Correctional Facility



SWIFT ACTION HELPS ACCIDENT VICTIM



On his way to work, Capt. Keith McConnell was traveling I-94 near Jackson when he saw a small pickup truck flipped over onto its top near the free-way. McConnell and another motorist stopped to assist any victims of the crash.

Once the man was removed from the vehicle, McConnell completed a primary assessment of the victim and found no apparent injuries. Blackman Township Police then arrived along with EMS. McConnell and the other motorist assisted the man into the ambulance and after returning home to get a clean uniform, McConnell went to work.

An older gentleman was trapped inside the pickup. The front of the truck was partially submerged into a marshy area and about half the cab was filled with water. McConnell and the other responder could not see the man because several boxes were blocking their view. Because of the damage to the truck, they couldn't open the door so McConnell broke the window with a tire iron.

Once the two responders got the boxes and debris out of the cab of the truck, they visually assessed the man for injuries and asked him if he was injured. He said he just wanted to get out because he was cold and lying in water up to his waist.

McConnell and the other responder reached in, each grabbing a shoulder of the man's coat, and pulled him out through the window.

McConnell said of the incident, "There really was nothing special about this incident. A person was in need of assistance and we simply, assisted. By the grace of God, no "life-saving" techniques were required and the elderly man by all accounts appeared to be okay."

However, Warden Paul Klee had a different opinion on McConnell's actions, saying, "Capt. McConnell's actions represent the type of employees that we have in this Department. I have been in a "roll over" and had to wait for assistance before I could get out. I remember how scared I felt not knowing what was going to happen next and not being able to do anything about it. Capt. McConnell's swift action allowed this person some comfort in knowing that there was someone there helping him through this difficult time. I am very proud of Captain McConnell's actions."

PEOPLE MAKE THE
DIFFERENCE



BE SAFE TO AND FROM WORK

Recently, multiple strong-arm robberies have occurred in downtown Lansing and Detroit. The Department of Technology, Management and Budget, in cooperation with local law enforcement offices, encourages employees to use caution when walking to and from work. Keep these useful safety guidelines in mind whenever you are walking:



- Avoid walking alone at night.
- Remain alert and aware of your surroundings. Refrain from wearing headphones, texting or doing other things that are distracting.
- Keep your cell phone charged, in hand and ready to use during your walk.

- Have your keys in hand when you go to your vehicle.
- Look around your vehicle before you approach it. If something is out of place, go to a safe place and call 911 or DTMB Central Control at (517) 373-0190 for help.
- Trust your instincts. If something feels wrong, call for assistance.
- Whenever possible, park and walk in well-lit and populated areas.

If you have questions or concerns, please email DTMB-Security@michigan.gov or contact DTMB Customer Service at (517) 373-6227.

HONOR GUARD SERVES AT FUNERAL DETAILS OVER 900 MILES APART ON THE SAME DAY

On January 28, 2012, the Michigan Department of Corrections Honor Guard had eight members serving at funeral details...935 miles apart. The unit had one four-member detail serving in Gwinn, Michigan at the funeral services of Marquette Branch Prison Corrections Officer Paul Couter, who died of cancer. In his final days, Paul personally requested the Honor Guard be at his funeral services. Another four-member detail was in Marianna, Arkansas serving at the funeral services of Arkansas Corrections Officer Barbara Ester. Corporal Ester was stabbed to death by a prisoner over a pair of contraband shoes. Sadly, January was a busy month for the Honor Guard with the unit also having served at the funeral of slain Michigan Corrections Officer Clarence Hammond III of Macomb Correctional Facility earlier in the month.

On a positive note, the newly formed South Dakota Department of Corrections (SDDOC) Honor Guard also attended the Ester funeral services in their new uniforms. The SDDOC created the unit after the death of one of their officers last year. Michigan's Honor Guard attended that funeral and South Dakota prison officials were so impressed with the look of our unit's uniform that they modeled their new uniform after ours (pictured at right).



MDOC Honor Guard members (L to R), John Fleenor, Christianna Borst, Kevin Smith, and Brandon Wenzel with three South Dakota Corrections Honor Guard members (yellow patches).

MDOC AND MDOT WORK TOGETHER TO SUPPLY RESOURCES AND REDUCE COSTS

The Tuscola Residential Reentry Program (TRRP) has teamed up with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to solve a significant issue facing the facility. TRRP uses a wood-fired boiler to heat the facility in the winter, but was running short on resources for wood. Because of the shortage, TRRP was going to have to purchase wood - a major expense that would strain the facility's budget.

Aware that MDOT was doing a lot of wood-cutting in the area, Sgt. Steve White reached out to MDOT to see if TRRP could receive the wood. MDOT is now supplying TRRP with wood at no charge. This is an excellent example of interagency collaboration between MDOT and MDOC, utilizing resources while eliminating a potentially budget-busting cost.



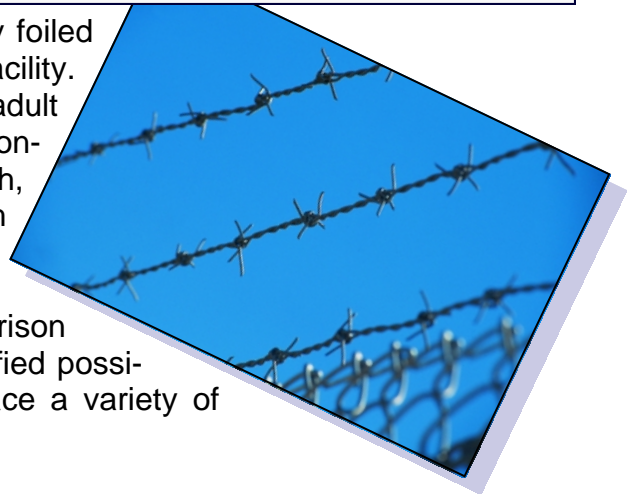
Special Alternative Incarceration (SAI) trainees cut wood for their boilers.

**Prisoner
Reentry**



LAKELAND STAFF INTERCEPT CONTRABAND THROWN OVER THE FENCE

Staff at Lakeland Correctional Facility in Coldwater recently foiled an attempt to introduce contraband over the fence of the facility. On the evening of January 26, 2012, three teens and an adult approached the fence of the facility, apparently throwing contraband into the prisoner yard. The suspects then ran north, into a wooded area. Prison staff contacted the Branch County Sheriff's Office and informed deputies where the suspects were headed. Deputies dispatched to the area apprehended all of the suspects. Corrections officers at the prison recovered the contraband thrown over the fence and identified possible recipients within the facility. All of the suspects will face a variety of charges related to the incident.



MDOC EMPLOYEE EARNS DIFFICULT CLASSIFICATION

In September 2011, Officer Paul Gooch received his certificate and the well-earned title of Professional Emergency Manager.

Over the past several years, Officer Gooch has been working towards this distinction. The first step was completing his Bachelor of Science in Emergency Management. In June 2010, Gooch completed that degree. He then began volunteering his time with Lapeer County's Emergency Management Office. During this time, Gooch decided to continue and work towards becoming an Emergency Manager.

To become an Emergency Manager in Michigan, the candidate must complete the Professional Emergency Management course through the Michigan State Police / Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD). This course requires the completion of 17 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Independent Study Courses, 2 MSP/EMHSD online courses and 11 MSP/EMHSD classroom courses. When all of these have been successfully completed, the candidate must apply to take a final written exam. Upon successful completion, the candidate is awarded the title of Professional Emergency Manager along with a certificate verifying such.



Paul has also completed the Department of Homeland Security's Weapons of Mass Destruction Standardized Awareness Authorized Trainer course, and has assisted in training this course to emergency responders.

Paul wishes to continue to volunteer his services to Lapeer County and would like to utilize his skills working with the State of Michigan.

M.S.I. ON FACEBOOK

TECHNOLOGY WILL MOVE US FORWARD

"**MONEYBALL**" is a biographical sports film starring Brad Pitt and is based on the book of the same name by Michael Lewis. It is about Billy Beane, the general manager of the Oakland Athletics baseball team, who needed to a way to find players and achieve success with limited resources and finances. Rather than using conventional means, Billy zeros in on computer technology to fill his roster. Convincing others of this methodology was not easy, but eventually the A's went on to win 20 consecutive games and set an American League Record.

In 2010 Michigan State Industries formed a team of staff to determine how to use our own computer generated tools to market our products and services and communicate to our current and prospective customers. Michigan State Industries made the decision to join the social network Community on Facebook.

"Community" is the catchphrase which has been connected to the Internet for a long time, and today, many use social services. The social media concept surfaced from our team brainstorming session on "Communication Best Practices." MSI decided that using social media would not only increase reliability and build its image, but effectively increase revenues and the number of customers.

The opportunity to engage in social networking was offered to MSI through the State of Michigan information technology department. State agencies were encouraged to create profiles using Facebook's "Pages." A Facebook Page is a public profile that enables you to share your business and products with Facebook users. A business category is selected which best fits your organization. MSI is located under the "Government Organizations" category. Pages offered ways to define our target audience and reach customers based on demographics such as age, location, interests, non-profit organizations, and more.

MSI hit upon the following strategies to move forward with creating a business profile:

- The Page must represent MSI's products and mission.
- Post regularly to develop deeper relationships with our customers.

- Expand our reach by posting a link on our website, flyers, business cards, etc.
- Set goals to shape Page posts and ensure they are useful and relevant.
- Create ads that focus and target the appropriate audience.



In today's society, it appears that having a simple website is no longer enough. Research has shown that social networking provides an avenue for businesses to market their products as well as their services, contract new customers, and maintain their current customer base in order to succeed. As we all know, marketing and advertising is the key to any business success. This all began with direct selling, evolved into advertisements with flyers, posters, then emails, websites, and now electronic ads on social networking sites. Targeting the appropriate customers is the best way to anticipate and meet the needs of those customers. Next steps are implementing Twitter; ISSUU; and iContact.

 **Like** us on Facebook today!

This article was written and submitted by Tujauna White, M.S.I. Marketing Manager.

REENTRY ROUNDTABLE

Reentry Roundtable is a continuing column that provides news, facts, and program successes within the prisoner reentry program.

PARTNERSHIP EQUALS SUCCESS FOR NORTHEAST PRISONER REENTRY AND THE MICHIGAN WORKS! ASSOCIATION

Northeast Prisoner Reentry has a unique way of providing services to its participants. They contract with the Michigan Works Association (MWA) to fund a portion of staff time, which provides services in each of the MWA offices in all 14 counties. MWA staff works closely with parole agents and local vendors (transits, landlords, thrift and resale shops, substance abuse agencies, community agencies, etc.) to meet the individualized needs of each returning citizen.



L to R: Ed, Marc Lauria of Michigan Works!, and Greg.

Ed and Greg were both Prisoner Reentry participants in the late fall of 2009. They both needed assistance with employment, transportation, treatment, and some other basic needs. Prisoner Reentry staff connected them with the Department of Human Services (DHS) for food assistance, to the local health department for health insurance through the Central Michigan Health Plan, and to Sterling Area Health Center for substance abuse treatment. All of these resources were leveraged and did not have to be paid for with any Prisoner Reentry funds. Ed and Greg both worked closely with MWA to complete employability workshops and a rigorous job

search, but the small county of Arenac did not offer much opportunity or support for the ex-offenders. They both got very discouraged. Coaching them required a lot of support which they found in their FOA/MWA Team. The Team met monthly to share info about Ed and Greg and brainstorm potential solutions.

Meanwhile, Ed and Greg did their part to job search, attend job readiness workshops and keep their appointments. Due to their diligence, when a good job opportunity at a local machining company came along, the Team recommended both Ed and Greg for the position. They had to undergo testing, which was facilitated through the Prisoner Reentry/MWA partnership. With the help of a transitional employment contract funded by Prisoner Reentry, Ed was hired in November 2010. Greg still needed employment, but the employer was not sure she could take on another employee. However, Ed created such a good impression, the employer decided to also employ Greg a month later, also on a transitional employment contract. Prisoner Reentry helped them with the resources they needed for their jobs. Both completed their contracts early, and they are both still working and have received raises.

Through the Prisoner Reentry programs, both Ed and Greg were trained as machinists and are on their way to self sufficiency and a better life. Ed and Greg's story was showcased at a recent Prisoner Reentry Advisory Council meeting, and it was noted that long-term support was vital for them to become gainfully employed and self sufficient.

This article was written and submitted by the Northeast Prisoner Reentry Community Coordinator Genny Wolfrum.